



THE DETERMINANTS OF RURAL-TO-URBAN LABOR MIGRATION IN KENYA

Henry Rempel

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT STUDY GROUP

Center for International Studies
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT STUDY GROUP

Jagdish M. Bhagwati

Nazli Choucri

Wayne A. Cornelius

John R. Harris

Michael J. Piore

Rosemarie S. Rogers

Myron Weiner

THE DETERMINANTS OF RURAL-TO-URBAN
LABOR MIGRATION IN KENYA

Henry Rempel

Department of Economics
The University of Manitoba

Migration and Development Study Group

Center for International Studies
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

May 1976

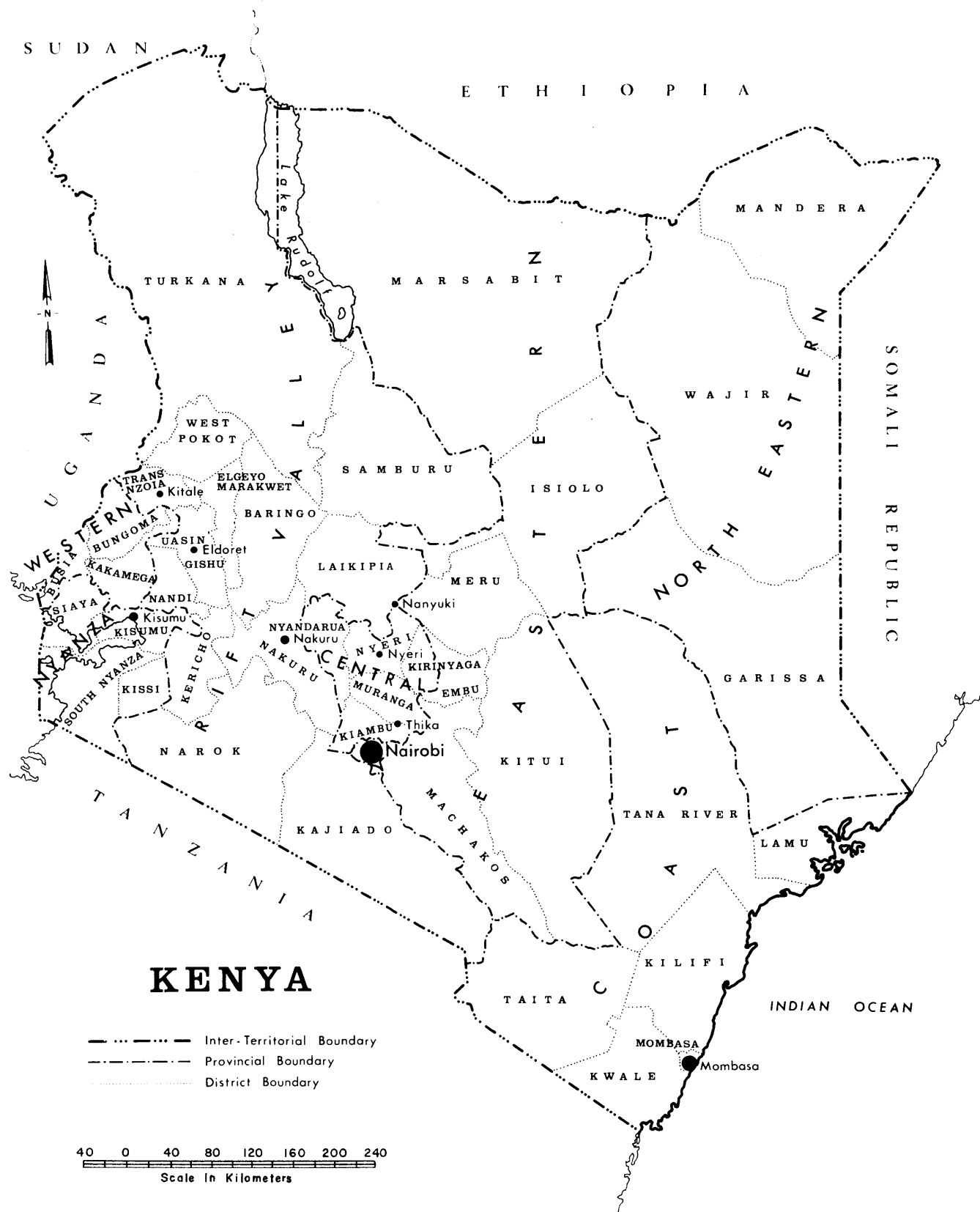
TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
List of Tables	iii
Map of Kenya	v
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODOLOGY	2
THE NATURE OF THE MIGRATION FLOWS	4
EVIDENCE OF RURAL PUSH FORCES	11
EVIDENCE OF URBAN PULL FORCES	18
THE ROLE OF CLAN CONTACTS IN THE RURAL-TO-URBAN MIGRATION PROCESS	26
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	36
Footnotes	39
Bibliography	41

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	Percentage Distribution of Men in Each Urban Center Who Were Born in a Particular Province	5
2	The Percentage Distribution of the Age of the Migrants in Each Province of Birth	6
3	Cross-Tabulation of the Education of the Migrants and the Education of Their Fathers	8
4	Percentage Distribution of Ethnic Groups in Each Province, as Reported in the Migration Survey and the 1969 Census	10
5	The Percentage Distribution By Province of Birth of the Primary Reasons for Leaving Their Previous Home Area	12
6	The Percentage Distribution of the Primary Reason for Leaving their Previous Home Area Within Each Type of Employment Prior to Migration	14
7	Average Cash Income Per Month Prior to Migration in Each Province, Within Each Education Group	16
8	The Percentage Distribution of the Primary Reason Given by the Migrants in Each Urban Center for Selecting This Particular Migration Destination	19
9	The Average Rural-Urban Income Differential Per Month Between Each Urban Center and Province During the Year Prior to Migration and the First Year After Migration	21
10	Average Cash Income Per Month in the First Year After Migration in Each Urban Center Within Each Education Group	22
11	The Average Cash Income Per Month in Each Urban Center in the Last Quarter of 1968 Within Each Education Group	23
12	The Percentage Distribution of the Men Who Received Assistance in Each Urban Center According to Their Primary Pull Forces	25

<u>Table</u>		<u>Page</u>
13	The Average Number of Months Per Quarter in Which Housing and Food Assistance Was Received in Each Urban Center in the Last Quarter of Each Year	27
14	The Percentage Distribution of the Primary Sources of Information About the Urban Centers, As Given by the Men in Each Urban Center	29
15	The Percentage Distribution of the Primary Sources of Information About the Urban Centers, As Given by the Men in Each Center Who Indicated Friends or Relatives There as the Primary Pull Force to the Urban Center	30
16	The Percentage Distribution of the Methods Used by the Men in Each Urban Center in Obtaining Their First Job	31
17	The Percentage Distribution of the Men Who Received Assistance in Each Urban Center Within Each of the Major Sources of Information About the Migration Destination	33
18	The Percentage Distribution of the Methods Used by the Men Within Each Primary Source of Information Category (About Their Respective Migrations) in Obtaining Their First Job	34



THE DETERMINANTS OF RURAL-TO-URBAN
LABOR MIGRATION IN KENYA*

The existence of a large-scale movement of rural Africans to the towns and cities in their respective countries is rather apparent in the studies on this subject. The more significant, yet much more elusive, question is why such a move is taking place. The purpose of this monograph is to identify forces which cause men to move from a rural to an urban setting. After describing the type of men who migrate, the considerable evidence on the "push" and "pull" determinants of migration is considered. The pages which follow summarize the conclusions of the study and briefly describe the data collection procedure.

*The author would like to express appreciation to the Institute for Development Studies, University College, Nairobi, for facilitating the field research on which this study is based, and to the Graduate School, University of Manitoba, for the financial assistance for the actual work on this monograph. The views expressed herein are those of the author and need not reflect the respective positions of the supporting agencies.

METHODOLOGY

The relevant population for sampling purposes included all African males, with ages ranging from 15 to 50 years, who had moved to one of eight urban centers after Kenya's Independence in December 1963 and were resident there at the time of the survey.¹ The sample in each urban center was obtained by selecting buildings at random from a map of the urban area. All relevant men resident in the designated buildings were then interviewed. The survey was carried out by approximately 50 students from University College, Nairobi. They returned to the urban center located in their respective home areas and administered the questionnaires to the relevant men. The ratio of completed questionnaires to known sample members was greater than 80 percent. The primary reason for not obtaining an interview was the inability to locate the particular respondent. Eighteen men refused to grant an interview. On the basis of this survey, 1,091 completed questionnaires were obtained.

The majority of the tabulations of questionnaire responses are presented as a percentage of the total number of responses in each urban center. (In the limited number of cases where the tabulations of questionnaire responses are presented in an alternative form, some caution should be exercised in interpreting the information.) The number of men selected in any one urban center was not necessarily proportional to the importance of the urban center in the migration process. Therefore, the total sample for the eight urban centers may not be correctly weighted with respect to the total urban immigration population. For a number of the tables the sample was divided into either two age or two education categories to test for significant variation in responses among these subgroups. The two education subgroups

are men who have completed a maximum of Standard VIII (primary education) and men who have completed Form I or more (secondary education). There was no logical dividing point for the two age groups so the sample was divided at the median age. The resulting age groups were 15 to 22 years (younger men) and 23 to 50 years (older men). Education was measured as of December 1968, while age was measured in the year of migration.

THE NATURE OF THE MIGRATION FLOWS

As a basis for discussing why rural people move to towns or cities, it is necessary to describe the magnitude of the migration flows observed in the survey and to indicate the type of rural people who choose to migrate.² The rural-urban migration observed in Kenya originated from six of Kenya's seven provinces (Table 1). On the western edge, bordering Lake Victoria, is Nyanza Province. This is predominantly a Luo area which contains one major urban center -- Kisumu. Western Province is located north of Nyanza Province, a Luhya area which does not contain any major urban centers. More than 70 percent of the migrations from Western Province originate from Kakamega District which is located approximately an equal distance from Kisumu and Eldoret. To the east the next province is Rift Valley which includes the former "white highlands" and contains both Nakuru and Eldoret. During the time of our survey there was very limited rural-to-urban migration from this province. The next province, Central, contains the densely populated Kikuyu areas and includes all the remaining urban centers except Mombasa, Kenya's seaport and center of economic activity in Coast Province. In between Central and Coast Provinces is Eastern Province. This is a rather sparsely populated area in which the Kamba, Meru and Embu peoples predominate.

Evidence concerning those who migrate indicates a disproportionate number of younger men with higher education are emigrating from the rural areas. In Table 2 the percentage distribution of the ages of the men in the sample is broken down by province of birth. Then they are compared with the age distribution of the total number of men in these provinces as reported in the 1969 Census. More than 80 percent of the men in the sample were less than 30 at the time of migration. Relative to the total population, the

Table 1

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MEN IN EACH URBAN CENTER WHO WERE BORN IN A PARTICULAR PROVINCE

Provincial Birthplace of Migrants	Urban Center							
	Kisumu (Nyanza)	Eldoret (Rift Valley)	Nakuru	Nyeri - - - - -	Nanyuki (Central)	Thika - - - - -	Nairobi	Mombasa (Coast)
Nyanza	66 5*	19	23	5	4	27	15	15
Western	26	50	23	1	4	6	15	15
Rift Valley	2	8 2*	20 0*	2	10	-	3	-
Central	-	10	27	88 0*	61 2*	42 5*	43 3*	9
Eastern	1	-	3	4	18	19	17	26
Coast	-	4	-	-	-	-	1	27 2*
Uganda and Tanzania	-	8	4	-	-	1	3	6
Total	100	101	100	100	99	100	100	100

Province and urban center listings are arranged approximately west to east. Population originally from the urban center itself who had left and returned is denoted by (*).

Table 2

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE AGE OF MIGRANTS
IN EACH PROVINCE OF BIRTH

Province of Birth	Age						Totals
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	
Nyanza	22	42	17	14	5	-	100
Western	23	41	15	15	5	1	100
Rift Valley	21	37	24	18	-	-	100
Central	22	45	17	12	4	-	100
Eastern	26	35	21	13	3	1	99
Coast	32	35	16	11	7	-	100
Urban Center	29	36	21	4	11	-	101
Totals	24	41	17½	13	4	½	100
1969 Census Age Distribution for African Males*	23	17	14	21	15	10	100

*Source: Republic of Kenya, Statistics Division, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Kenya Population Census, 1969, Vol. I (November 1970), Table III.

propensity to migrate is highest in the 20 to 24 age category and drops off very rapidly after the age of 30.

There are several possible explanations for this high tendency to migrate by the younger men. Firstly, the potential time span for collecting the difference in expected income streams between urban and rural locations is longer for younger men so they have a greater incentive to invest in a spatial move. Secondly, it is to be expected that the degree to which the future is discounted varies directly with age.³ As a result, the gain from a move

relative to the cost is less attractive for older men.

In Africa, it has been suggested, some time spent in an urban center may carry a degree of prestige bordering on that of initiation into manhood.⁴ If this is correct, we would expect the men to view their stay in the urban center as temporary in nature: for the majority of the men in our sample this was not the case. Asked whether they planned to stay in the urban center or whether they intended to leave prior to retirement, 59 percent of the men considered themselves a permanent part of the urban labor force, 31 percent planned to leave within five years, and an additional 10 percent were uncertain about their future migration plans. Of the 31 percent who were planning to leave within five years, approximately one-third appeared to be circulating back and forth between a rural area and an urban center, and another third were leaving because they were unemployed or wished to improve their employment position elsewhere. Of the 10 percent who were uncertain about their future plans, 28 percent fitted into the labor circulation category while 43 percent were concerned about improving their employment position. Therefore, only 13 percent of the total sample are made up of temporary migrants.

In Table 3 the education of the migrants is cross-tabulated by the education of their fathers. Both distributions are then compared with the education of men in comparable ages as reported in the 1962 Census. Certainly the census distribution understates the 1968 levels of educational attainment since there have been significant advances in the provision of educational opportunity in the post-Independence period. This is evident in the survey sample where 34 percent of the men under 23 have some secondary education. On the basis of these available data, there does not appear to be a significant difference between the education of the fathers of the migrants and the

Table 3

CROSS-TABULATION OF THE EDUCATION OF THE MIGRANTS AND THE EDUCATION OF THEIR FATHERS
(Percentages)

Education of the Migrant's Father	Migrant's Education				Totals	Distribution of the Education of the Men Age 35 to 59 According to the 1962 Census*
	No Formal Education	Standards 1 - 4	Standards 5 - 8	Forms 1 - 6		
No Formal Education	12.1	13.3	38.4	14.1	77.9	72.7
Standards 1 - 4	.3	.9	4.7	6.6	12.5	18.0
Standards 5 - 8	.3	.6	3.8	4.3	9.0	8.4
Forms 1 - 6	-	-	.2	.4	.6	.9
Totals	12.7	14.8	47.1	25.4	100.0	100.0
Distribution of the Education of the Men Age 15 to 49 According to the 1962 Census*	53.5	22.3	21.9	2.3	100.0	

*Source: Kenya, Statistics Division, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, Statistical Abstract, 1968, Tables 17 and 19.

education of all Kenyan Africans in the comparable age group. A comparison of the education of the men in the sample with the equivalent group in the census indicates that the propensity to migrate to an urban center increases substantially with education. Of the men with some secondary education, 84 percent were in school in the quarter prior to migration.

Within the sample there is a correlation between education and the size of the migration flows from the respective rural areas. Therefore, to the extent that education is a determinant of migratory behavior, the variation in educational achievement among provinces may explain the relative importance of Central and Nyanza Provinces as sources of migration, and the relative unimportance of Eastern and Coast Provinces. It is also possible that cultural differences among these provinces determine both the educational level and the propensity to migrate. In order to check on such a common determinant of education and migration, a comparison was made of the distribution of major ethnic groups among provinces in the survey sample and the 1969 Census (Table 4). Assuming the ratio of males ages 15 to 50 years to total male population is the same within each province as nationally, the ethnic distribution of migrants can be compared to the overall ethnic distribution in their province of origin (e.g., Luos, who made up 62 percent of the Nyanza population make up 90 percent of migrants of Nyanza origin -- see Table 4, column 1). The deviation of observed migrants in each ethnic group and province from the corresponding expected values is statistically significant. There appears to be a distinct tendency for the Kikuyu, and to a lesser extent the Luo, to migrate in above average numbers while the Kisii, Kipsigi, Embu, and Meru have a low propensity to migrate. A causal explanation of these differing propensities to migrate among ethnic groups is beyond the scope of this study.

Table 4

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN EACH PROVINCE,
AS REPORTED IN THE MIGRATION SURVEY AND THE 1969 CENSUS* (MALES ONLY)

Province	Ethnic Group and Province in which it is Dominant								Total
	Luo - (Nyanza)	Kisii Kipsigi -	Luhya (Western)	Kikuyu (Central)	Embu Meru - (Eastern)	Kamba -	Coast Tribes	Other Tribes	
Nyanza	89.7 62.0	6.9 32.2	1.7 1.9	- 0.3	- -	- -	- 0.5	1.7 3.1	100.0 100.0
Western	3.4 1.5	- 0.1	92.6 87.7	- 0.9	- 0.1	- 0.1	- -	4.0 9.6	100.0 100.0
Rift Valley	2.6 3.8	10.3 22.1	10.3 7.3	69.1 15.3	- 0.6	- 0.7	- 0.2	7.7 50.0	100.0 100.0
Central	- 0.6	- 0.3	- 0.7	99.7 99.5	0.3 0.6	- 1.6	- 0.1	- 0.6	100.0 100.0
Eastern	- 0.2	- 0.1	0.6 0.2	2.5 1.5	15.8 34.6	78.6 53.6	0.6 0.1	1.9 9.7	100.0 100.0
Coast	- 4.3	- 0.2	- 2.7	- 2.8	- 0.5	5.5 7.8	93.1 76.5	1.4 5.2	100.0 100.0

Survey percentages are given above Census percentages.

*Source: Republic of Kenya, Statistics Division, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Kenya Population Census, 1969, Vol. 1 (November 1970), Table II.

EVIDENCE OF RURAL PUSH FORCES

It is helpful to distinguish the emigration push from the immigration pull forces when considering the motivation behind rural-to-urban migration. In an attempt to ascertain the push factor the migrant was asked, "What made you decide to leave the home you had in the district before you came here?" As indicated in Table 5, 84 percent of the men said they migrated because of limited economic opportunities in their home area.⁵ In contrast, only 0.2 percent left because of a lack of social amenities, other than schools, in their home area. Of the men who could not find work in their home area, 75.5 percent did not give a second reason for leaving. Of the men who indicated the lack of land as a primary reason for leaving, 89.0 percent indicated an inability to find work as their second reason for leaving.

Chi-square tests on the primary reason for leaving the home area were based on the two economic reasons (Columns 1 and 2 in Table 5), versus all other reasons. In a comparison of the responses to the question between the two age and education subgroups, we note the older men experienced above average difficulty in finding employment in their home area while the men with secondary education had the least difficulty. The greatest variation between the two age groups was in the unavailability of land as a reason for leaving, with the older men more often leaving for lack of adequate land. The lack of schools and social amenities is of greatest concern to the younger men and those with secondary education.

In addition to the chi-square tests on age and education mentioned above, tests for significant variation in economic versus non-economic reasons for leaving the home area were made, separating the respondents by marital status, land ownership and future migration intentions. The variation in responses

Table 5
THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION BY PROVINCE OF BIRTH
OF THE PRIMARY REASONS FOR LEAVING THEIR PREVIOUS HOME AREA

Province of Birth	Primary Reason for Leaving Previous Home Area					Totals
	Could Not Find Work	Land Was Not Available	Lack of Schools	Lack of Social Amenities	Other Reasons	
Nyanza	85.5	-	5.0	-	9.5	100.0
Western	84.5	2.0	3.5	-	10.0	100.0
Rift Valley	87.0	2.5	2.5	-	8.0	100.0
Central	78.0	7.0	6.0	.5	8.5	100.0
Eastern	84.0	2.5	2.5	-	11.0	100.0
Coast	77.0	3.0	5.0	-	15.0	100.0
Urban Center	71.5	-	3.5	-	25.0	100.0
Totals	82.0	3.0	4.5	-	10.5	100.0

for the three marital status categories (married with wife resident elsewhere, married with wife in urban center, and single) was significant. The dominant deviation from expected values was a disproportionately low number of men with a wife resident elsewhere who indicated non-economic reasons for leaving, and the exact opposite for the single men. The variation in responses to push forces in relation to land ownership and future migration intention was not significant. The three land ownership groupings were: no land, 1 to 5 acres of land, and five or more acres of land. The future migration intention categories were: intend to stay, plan to leave within five years, and uncertain about future migration plans.

Since almost half of the migrants were students prior to migration, it is relevant to consider the distribution of the push forces within each type of employment prior to migration (Table 6). The variation in the distribution of economic (first two rows) and non-economic (last three rows) reasons for leaving is statistically significant among employment types. The self-employed, farmers, part-time employed and the unemployed were apparently more strongly influenced by economic push factors than those who were employed or in school.

One of the reasons why relatively few men were farming prior to migration is that only one-third of the men have land which they can farm. In addition, 31 percent of the migrants either no longer have a father or their father has no land. Therefore, the majority of the migrants are landless and almost one-half of the men without land have no prospect of obtaining land unless they can earn sufficient money to purchase it. Furthermore, in the cases where both the migrant and his father possess land, approximately half of these claims are for the same piece of land. The migrant already refers to the land as his land even though the father still possesses it.

As a measure of the strength of push factors, an average cash income

Table 6

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRIMARY REASON FOR LEAVING THEIR PREVIOUS HOME AREA
WITHIN EACH TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT PRIOR TO MIGRATION

Primary Reason for Leaving Home District	Nature of Employment Prior to Migration						Totals (99.5)
	In School (47.5)	Employed for Wages (16.0)	Self- Employed (4.0)	Farming (16.5)	Employed Part-time (3.5)	Unemployed (12.0)	
Could Not Find Work	79.0	75.0	78.0	92.0	78.5	87.0	82.0
Land Was Not Available	2.0	2.5	7.0	1.0	16.0	7.0	3.0
Lack of Schools	8.5	-	2.0	2.0	-	-	4.5
Lack of Social Amenities	-	.5	-	-	-	-	-
Other Reasons	10.5	22.0	13.0	5.0	5.5	6.0	10.5
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

() shows percentage of total respondents in each category

per month was calculated for each province and each of the four education groups. (Cash income included employment income plus net income from self-employment and farming.) All migrants who were students prior to migration were excluded for the purposes of calculating these average incomes. As Table 7 indicates, average earnings in rural areas vary directly with the level of education. The average income for the total group was 76.22 shillings (U.S. \$10.67) per month. The above average earnings reported for Rift Valley Province are a possible explanation why limited out-migration was observed there. The average income of men listing economic reasons as the primary factor in their migrating is lower than that of those reporting non-economic factors as primary, although only in Nyanza Province is the difference statistically significant.

In addition to this question, the migrants were asked: "The Tanzanian Government has recently established a law which seeks to re-settle the urban unemployed landless workers on cooperative farming ventures" (or for those who have their own land: "The Tanzanian Government is sending the urban unemployed back to their land to become farmers). Do you think this is a good policy?" Of the 905 men who responded, 58 percent agreed it was a good policy, 28 percent disagreed, and the remainder either had not heard of the policy or did not express an opinion. For the unemployed respondents we asked further, "Would you be willing to go back to your farm or to a government cooperative, or would you prefer to stay here and continue to try and find work?" Of the unemployed who had agreed it was a good policy, 75 percent said they would be willing to go back while 18 percent would not be. Of the unemployed who did not like the policy, 43 percent would be willing to go back while 55 percent said no. Therefore, 60 percent of the migrants would favor a back to the land policy for urban unemployed and 61 percent of the unemployed would be willing to cooperate in such a plan. This provides additional evidence of the

Table 7

AVERAGE CASH INCOME PER MONTH PRIOR TO MIGRATION IN EACH PROVINCE,
WITHIN EACH EDUCATION GROUP

(Kenya shillings: 1 shilling is U.S.14¢; the income range is thus about U.S.\$2.50 to \$65.00)

Province	No Formal Education	Education Standard		Forms 1 - 6	Means
		1 - 4	5 - 8		
Nyanza	27	44	75	162	69
Western	18	23	137	345*	83
Rift Valley	50	69	116	465*	127
Central	35	61	93	208	85
Eastern	25	18	97	-	55
Coast	20	30	67	-	41
Total					76.22

*The number of observations involved is less than five.

importance of economic push forces in migration.

The actual strength of push forces cannot be determined, partly due to the problem involved in separating push forces from pull forces. If economic determinants dominate in the migratory process, then the migrant moves on the basis of the income opportunities he perceives elsewhere as well as the income opportunities in his home district. If he believes a sufficient differential does exist and is, as a result, prepared to migrate, it would be correct to describe his behavior in both push and pull terms. Thus the push forces may be only relative: local opportunities might exist, but in relation to alternative opportunities elsewhere the jobs may appear undesirable. Such a lack of absolute push forces has been reported by Caldwell in his study of rural-urban migration in Ghana.⁶ He found a strong tendency for households

in Ghana with above average incomes to produce a disproportionate number of persons planning rural-urban migration. He proposed two possible reasons for this tendency. To begin with, those households of above average economic levels have a greater likelihood of keeping their children in school, which in turn has an impact on rural-urban migration. Secondly, a household already may have achieved an above average economic position because a family member is in an urban center providing financial assistance, with his presence in the urban center providing an incentive for additional rural-urban migration.

Although it is not possible to measure the degree of strength of push forces for the total sample, the available evidence indicates that they are stronger for some migrants than for others. As we noted, the students and the employed in the rural areas placed less emphasis on economic forces than did the farmers, self-employed, part-time employed and the unemployed. In addition, the unemployed in the urban centers who did not possess land indicated, by expressing a preference for an effective back to the land policy, that they were influenced by an economic push force.

EVIDENCE OF URBAN PULL FORCES

In order to ascertain the existence of urban pull forces, the migrants were asked, "Once you had decided to leave your previous home, why did you choose to come here?" As seen in Table 8, 61 percent of the men indicated that they chose the urban center which provided them with the best possibility of finding employment. The only other reason of obvious importance was the presence of friends or relatives in that particular urban center. There may be considerable overlap between these two reasons, since the possibility of finding employment in an urban center is determined in part by the presence of friends or relatives there. For example, 29 percent of the men who mentioned the possibility of finding work as their most important reason gave the presence of friends or relatives as a secondary reason. Similarly, 36 percent of the men who mentioned the presence of friends or relatives as their primary reason mentioned the possibility of finding employment as a secondary reason. (In both groups approximately half of the men did not indicate a second reason for their choosing a particular urban center.)

Among the urban centers Kisumu, Nakuru, Nairobi, Nyeri, and Nanyuki ranked above average with regard to expected employment opportunities, while Mombasa and Eldoret were highest with respect to the presence of friends or relatives. Nyeri ranked high on being close to home. Older respondents indicated an above average concern about employment opportunities and placed relatively less weight on the presence of friends and relatives.

Some additional evidence of the importance of employment opportunities as a pull to a particular urban center was found by asking respondents to visualize a job paying 200 shillings per month which was to be available in either the urban center or their home district, and having them indicate their

Table 8

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRIMARY REASON GIVEN BY THE MIGRANTS IN EACH URBAN CENTER
FOR SELECTING THIS PARTICULAR MIGRATION DESTINATION

Reason for Selection	Urban Center								Totals
	Kisumu	Eldoret	Nakuru	Nyeri	Nanyuki	Thika	Nairobi	Mombasa	
Best Chance for Finding Work	79	58	66	74	66	62	66	42	62
Schools Available	5	-	3	-	-	6	6	2	4
Social Amenities Available	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
I Have Friends or Relatives Here	12	40	28	5	18	25	17	43	24
It is Close to my Home Area	1	-	-	10	2	1	2	1	2
Other Reasons	4	2	3	11	14	6	8	12	8
Totals	101	100	100	100	100	100	100	101	100

locational preference. Seventy-eight percent of the men indicated a preference for their home area. The remainder of the men gave various reasons for preferring their migration destination, with the better living conditions available in the urban centers scoring the highest response rate. (According to the interviewers' impressions, the primary reason for preferring a rural area under these conditions was the lower cost of living in rural areas. If so, we have evidence here of a clear perception of real income differences and a willingness to take advantage of higher real earnings possibilities.)

The importance the migrants placed on urban economic pull forces to explain their migratory behavior is confirmed by the income experience of men who were not students prior to migration. In Table 9 the average differentials in cash income per month for each combination of urban migration destination and provincial migration origin have been calculated. In both locations cash income included employment income plus net cash income from self-employment or farming sources. The average income differential for the 473 men who were not students prior to migration and who reported their cash income was 103 shillings.

In addition to Table 9, the average income differential in each urban center was calculated: (1) for men who had indicated employment opportunities as the primary pull force; (2) men who had indicated the presence of friends or relatives as the primary pull force; and (3) men who had indicated an alternative primary pull force. In only one case were the averages significantly different (Nairobi, where the average income differential for men who had identified employment opportunities as the primary pull force was significantly lower than that for men stressing other pull forces -- 101 shillings vs. 246 shillings). A similar comparison was made of the average income differential between men who indicated a lack of employment opportunities

Table 9

THE AVERAGE RURAL-URBAN INCOME DIFFERENTIAL PER MONTH BETWEEN EACH URBAN CENTER AND PROVINCE
DURING THE YEAR PRIOR TO MIGRATION AND THE FIRST YEAR AFTER MIGRATION

(Kenya shillings)

Province	Urban Center							
	Kisumu	Eldoret	Nakuru	Nyeri	Nanyuki	Thika	Nairobi	Mombasa
Nyanza	106	60*	87	380*	n	103	126	92
Western	71	25	108	n	20*	70*	172	60
Rift Valley	80*	-33*	77	60*	140*	n	162	100*
Central	220*	-7*	93*	108	59	72	102	100
Eastern	n	n	n	70*	207	142	154	77
Coast	n	0*	n	n	n	n	n	126
Urban Center	287	80*	71	170*	-10*	28	66	189
Totals	102	26	84	117	92	94	125	105

*less than five observations

n indicates no observations

available or a lack of land available as the primary push force from their home district and men who identified an alternative push force. Again, the variation in the average income differentials was statistically significant in only one case (Nyanza, where the differentials were 43 and 317 shillings).

Since men who were students prior to migration became a part of the urban labor force after migration, the average urban cash income per month was calculated for each of the four education groups in each of the urban centers (Table 10). During the first year after migration, average income for the total sample was 199 shillings per month, or 123 shillings above the average income in the rural areas for men who had not been students. This rural-urban income differential is 20 shillings per month higher than the average differential reported in Table 9. This indicates that men who were students

Table 10

AVERAGE CASH INCOME PER MONTH IN THE FIRST YEAR AFTER MIGRATION
IN EACH URBAN CENTER, WITHIN EACH EDUCATION GROUP

(Kenya shillings)

Urban Center	No Formal Education	Education Standard		Forms 1 - 6	Total
		1 - 4	5 - 8		
Kisumu	112	139	154	481	202
Eldoret	43	72	108	289	125
Nakuru	98	137	106	347	143
Nyeri	93	177	225	521	312
Nanyuki	105*	144	238	440*	229
Thika	175*	117	166	245	188
Nairobi	148	120	197	339	228
Mombasa	137	141	133	214	147

*The number of observations involved is less than five.

prior to migration (and possibly those who emigrated from an urban center) were reporting higher urban incomes than men who had not been students prior to migration. The above average urban income of the men who were students prior to migration is to be expected, since 84 percent of the men in the secondary education group were students prior to migration.

The element of uncertainty involved in urban in-migration is evident in a comparison of Table 11 with Table 10. On the average, the urban monthly cash income of the migrants had increased by more than 75 shillings since their first year in the urban center, to 276 shillings at the time of the survey. The improved income position is evident in each education group and each of the urban centers. In part, the improved income reflects increases in wages granted to all employees. The Economic Survey of 1968 reports an increase in

Table 11

THE AVERAGE CASH INCOME PER MONTH IN EACH URBAN CENTER
IN THE LAST QUARTER OF 1968 WITHIN EACH EDUCATION GROUP

(Kenya shillings)

Urban Center	No Formal Education	Education Standard		Forms 1 - 6	Total
		1 - 4	5 - 8		
Kisumu	158	171	213	527	258
Eldoret	50	144	137	544	193
Nakuru	140	143	158	529	203
Nyeri	120	183	279	652	378
Nanyuki	164	167	299	480	286
Thika	200	137	221	472	299
Nairobi	184	158	264	487	321
Mombasa	141	204	199	337	211

average earnings of 24 percent for all employees in the private sector during the period 1964 to 1967.⁷ The remainder of the earnings increase evident in the survey sample (14 percent, neglecting incomplete overlap of the periods being compared) indicates that either a larger proportion of the men had obtained employment by the end of 1968, or on the average the men had been able to improve their employment position, or some combination of these two possibilities. (During this same time period the price index for wage-earners in Nairobi increased by ten percent so real income as well as money income improved.⁸)

As reported earlier, the second most important urban pull force was the presence of friends or relatives in the urban center. As a check on the assistance provided by friends or relatives, separate percentages on the number of men who received assistance were calculated for respondents who identified friends or relatives as the primary pull force as against those who identified an alternative pull force (Table 12).

The vast majority of the men received either food or housing assistance after migration but less than 40 percent received assistance in obtaining employment. Although most of the men in both groups received food or housing, with the exception of Kisumu and Nanyuki the proportion of men receiving such assistance is somewhat higher for the men who identified friends or relatives as the primary pull force. The proportion of men receiving assistance in obtaining employment was also usually higher for those identifying friends or relatives as the primary pull factor.

Table 12

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE MEN WHO RECEIVED ASSISTANCE
IN EACH URBAN CENTER ACCORDING TO THEIR PRIMARY PULL FORCES

Urban Center	<u>Friends or Relatives There</u>		<u>Other Pull Force</u>	
	<u>Received</u> Food or Housing	<u>Received</u> Employment Assistance	<u>Received</u> Food or Housing	<u>Received</u> Employment Assistance
Kisumu	60	47	59	45
Eldoret	95	43	87	29
Nakuru	89	26	83	48
Nyeri	100	75	58	40
Nanyuki	56	78	56	40
Thika	95	25	90	34
Nairobi	97	44	82	34
Mombasa	96	38	85	31
Totals	92	40	77	37

THE ROLE OF CLAN CONTACTS IN THE RURAL-TO-URBAN MIGRATION PROCESS

For a rural resident the move to a city or a town involves substantial costs as well as potential economic gains. Initially there is the cost of travel to an urban center. Once in the urban center there is the need to provide food and shelter, which typically costs more than in rural areas. In addition to such economic costs there are non-economic costs which are frequently difficult to measure.⁹ Beyond this, such a move entails considerable uncertainty since the probability of obtaining desired employment is somewhat less than one in the cities and towns of Kenya.

The economic costs involved in a move and the employment uncertainty can be reduced significantly if the prospective migrant can rely on a friend or relative (clan contact) to provide assistance during and after the move. As noted in the previous sections, 24 percent of the men indicated friends or relatives in the city of destination as the primary reason for selecting a particular urban center. The importance of clan contacts was most evident for the younger men. The extent of assistance in the form of food and housing provided for the migrants is reported in Table 13. In this table possible values range from 0 for no assistance received, to 3 for three months of assistance received during the quarter. Most of the values are less than one, indicating that most men received either no assistance or assistance for a relatively short time. On the average, housing is more likely to be provided than food.

This importance of clan contacts in the rural-to-urban migration process

Table 13

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF MONTHS PER QUARTER IN WHICH HOUSING AND FOOD ASSISTANCE
WAS RECEIVED IN EACH URBAN CENTER IN THE LAST QUARTER OF EACH YEAR

Urban Center	YEAR									
	1964		1965		1966		1967		1968	
	Room	Food	Room	Food	Room	Food	Room	Food	Room	Food
Kisumu	.60	.20	.27	.11	.55	.34	.67	.53	.67	.61
Eldoret	.62	.15	1.00	.70	1.25	.94	1.45	.93	1.41	1.25
Nakuru	.42	.32	.45	.27	.79	.52	1.20	.88	1.30	1.27
Nyeri	.23	.35	.18	.27	.39	.43	.29	.29	.62	.58
Nanyuki	1.18	1.09	.81	.81	.82	.65	.65	.58	.43	.37
Thika	.13	.17	.70	.45	.46	.32	.53	.35	.42	.29
Nairobi	.42	.31	.41	.29	.84	.62	.84	.55	.93	.63
Mombasa	.60	.55	.63	.43	1.21	.88	1.19	.89	1.31	1.00
Total	.48	.38	.48	.35	.85	.62	.87	.62	.95	.74

is evident also in the responses to two other questions asked in the survey. First, men were asked to rank the three most important sources of information about their migration destination. As indicated in Table 14, 66 percent ranked either family members or friends as the most important source of information. Adding the second and third most important sources of information when these were given, family members and friends become far more important than any other sources. Men in Nairobi, Thika and Nyeri show proportionately less reliance on family members and men in Nairobi, Kisumu and Nyeri proportionately more reliance on friends than elsewhere. The men with secondary education have a marked tendency to depend more on other sources than relatives or friends.

As an additional check on the role of friends and relatives as sources of information, Table 15 indicates the distribution of the primary source of information for men who indicated friends or relatives as the primary pull force to the urban center. Several conclusions can be drawn from a comparison of Table 15 and Table 14. Firstly, for this subset of the sample, family members are relatively more important and friends relatively less important than for the total sample. Secondly, even though the presence of friends or relatives was the primary pull force to the urban center, the distribution of the primary sources of information is not very different from that of the total sample. Therefore, even though friends or relatives are in the urban center, the migrants have and use alternative information sources. In fact, the presence of the friends or relatives in the urban center may be a stimulus for utilizing the media and other sources as a means for obtaining information about particular urban centers.

An attempt was also made to determine the process used by the men to obtain their first job in an urban center. As reported in Table 16, assistance

Table 14

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRIMARY SOURCES OF INFORMATION
ABOUT THE URBAN CENTERS AS GIVEN BY THE MEN IN EACH URBAN CENTER

Sources of Information	Urban Center								Totals
	Kismu	Eldoret	Nakuru	Nyeri	Nanyuki	Thika	Nairobi	Mombasa	
Newspapers	7	4	12	11	4	14	12	11	10
Radio	1	-	3	-	2	10	3	2	3
Labour Exchange	2	4	3	1	4	7	2	2	3
Family Members	36	52	38	18	36	22	27	37	32
Friends	44	33	35	39	34	21	37	26	34
School Teacher	3	2	3	1	6	4	3	1	2
Career Counsellor	-	-	-	4	-	4	2	-	1
Other Sources	6	6	6	26	14	18	14	22	15
Totals	99	101	100	100	100	100	100	101	100

Table 15

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRIMARY SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE URBAN CENTERS
AS GIVEN BY THE MEN IN EACH URBAN CENTER WHO INDICATED FRIENDS OR RELATIVES THERE
AS THE PRIMARY PULL FORCE TO THE URBAN CENTER

Sources of Information	Urban Center								Totals
	Kismu	Eldoret	Nakuru	Nyeri	Nanyuki	Thika	Nairobi	Mombasa	
Newspapers	-	5	5	25	-	5	15	6	7
Radio	-	-	11	-	11	10	5	2	4
Labour Exchange	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Family Members	60	67	42	25	78	40	46	49	50
Friends	40	24	37	25	11	20	25	19	23
School Teacher	-	5	-	-	-	5	3	-	2
Career Counsellor	-	-	-	25	-	5	-	-	1
Other Sources	-	-	-	-	-	15	7	24	13
Totals	100	101	100	100	100	100	101	100	100

Table 16

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE METHODS USED BY THE MEN IN EACH URBAN CENTER
IN OBTAINING THEIR FIRST JOB

Method Used in Obtaining First Job	Urban Center								Totals
	Kisumu	Eldoret	Nakuru	Nyeri	Nanyuki	Thika	Nairobi	Mombasa	
Friend or Relative	50	35	39	42	48	31	35	33	38
Newspaper	11	2	2	4	6	6	6	6	6
Labor Exchange	9	2	3	2	8	33	5	4	7
Radio	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heard of Job and Applied	11	4	5	7	-	10	15	22	13
Other Method	9	17	16	33	34	14	18	20	19
Started His Own Business	-	-	-	5	2	-	5	3	3
Still Unemployed	9	40	33	7	2	6	14	12	14
No Response	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Totals	100	100	100	100	100	100	99	100	100

from friends or relatives was most important. The interaction between methods used to find employment, urban center groupings, and educational variables was significant.¹⁰ Men with primary education rely more on relatives and friends than the men in the secondary education group. The latter place greater reliance on newspapers, information from others, and applying in person. The variation in the number of unemployed was small among the two education groups; but by contrast 19 percent of the younger men were unemployed as compared to 7 percent of the older men.

The quality of the clan contacts is also relevant. To what extent can the clan contacts provide the assistance needed to reduce the cost and the uncertainty of a rural-urban move? This question was dealt with partially in the previous section. In Table 17 the distribution of assistance received by the men who identified friends or relatives as the dominant pull force is compared with the distribution of assistance received within the remainder of the sample. Although there is considerable variation among urban centers, the distribution among sources of information does not indicate that the provision of information by friends or relatives necessarily means the migrant will receive food, housing or assistance in obtaining employment. Conversely, men who utilize alternative information sources did receive considerable food, housing and employment assistance. Compared to the rest of the sample, those who relied on friends or relatives as their primary information source received comparatively more assistance in finding employment than in finding food and housing.

Finally, the relationship between the primary source of information and the method of obtaining the first job must be considered (Table 18). Where the primary source of information was friends or relatives, reliance on them for obtaining employment is slightly above average (43 and 44 percent

Table 17

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MEN WHO RECEIVED ASSISTANCE IN EACH URBAN CENTER
WITHIN EACH OF THE MAJOR SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE MIGRATION DESTINATION

Assistance Received Within Each Primary Information Source	Urban Center						Totals
	Kisumu	Eldoret	Nakuru	Nyeri	Nanyuki	Thika	
Media							
-Food and Housing	77	100	92	80	40	88	85
-Employment Assistance	36	25	25	13	20	24	25
Family							
-Food and Housing	75	93	92	73	61	100	88
-Employment Assistance	49	37	56	54	56	28	43
Friends, Teachers or Career Counsellor							
-Food and Housing	49	94	80	54	60	96	74
-Employment Assistance	47	39	42	56	60	43	41
Other Sources							
-Food and Housing	25	33	50	52	43	80	76
-Employment Assistance	25	-	-	14	-	33	20

Table 18

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE METHODS USED BY THE MEN WITHIN EACH PRIMARY SOURCE
OF INFORMATION CATEGORY (ABOUT THEIR RESPECTIVE MIGRATIONS) IN OBTAINING THEIR FIRST JOB

Methods Used in Obtaining First Job	News- papers	Labour Exchange	Radio	Family Members	Friends	School Teacher	Career Counsellor	Other Sources	Totals
Friend or Relative	24	18	32	43	44	35	31	28	38
Newspaper	22	11	7	3	3	15	15	6	6
Labour Exchange	7	28	14	6	5	4	23	6	7
Radio	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heard of Job and Applied	17	18	11	10	15	8	15	15	13
Other Method	12	4	25	17	14	31	15	38	19
Started His Own Business	3	-	-	2	5	-	-	2	3
Still Unemployed	15	21	11	19	13	8	-	5	14
Totals	100	100	100	100	99	101	99	100	100

respectively, as opposed to 38 percent overall), but other means for obtaining employment are used extensively as well. For men who received information from relatives, the unemployment rate is 19 percent, which is somewhat higher than the 14 percent for the total sample. A possible explanation for this higher unemployment rate is the migrant's ability to wait for a desired job if he can rely on relatives for food and housing during the interim.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results presented in this paper are based primarily on the explanations of their own behavior given by 1091 men ages 15 to 50 selected at random from among migrants into Kenya's eight largest urban centers between December 1963 and December 1968. Findings indicate first that it is predominately the younger men who migrate: at the time of migration 80 percent of the men were less than 30 years old and a large number were in the 21 to 24 age bracket. There is also some indication that there was less risk involved in a move for the older men who chose to migrate. Prior to migration, there was more unemployment among the older men; yet after migration the older men were more successful in obtaining some type of employment. One possible explanation for this variation in urban unemployment may be a greater willingness on the part of younger men to remain unemployed for a time in order to obtain a better job.

There is conclusive evidence that the propensity to migrate increases with the level of educational attainment. If a person has secondary education, the probability of a rural-urban move appears to be very high. In the sample there was direct correlation between the relative levels of migration flows from the different rural areas, the proportion of men from each rural area with secondary education and the relative levels of migration flows among the major ethnic groups. The Kikuyu from Central Province predominate in the migration flows. The Luo, and to a lesser extent the Luhya (primarily from Kakamega District), and the Kamba indicated an above average propensity to migrate as well. In contrast, the Kisii, Kipsigi, Embu and Meru plus all ethnic groups from Rift Valley Province, except the Kikuyu, indicate a relatively low propensity to migrate. For all the ethnic groups, the number of men engaged in farming prior to migration was relatively small. One reason

why few men were engaged in farming was the limited access to land of the men in the survey. With the possible exception of the Luo, the migrants had well below the average amount of land per capita available in each province.

The first determinant of rural-urban migration considered is the rural push force. The push to emigrate expressed by the migrants is predominantly in terms of the limited economic opportunities in their home areas. This is most pronounced for the men who were farmers, self-employed, part-time employed or unemployed. The men who had been in school or were unemployed prior to migration placed relatively less weight on the lack of economic opportunities although, even for these men, the limited economic opportunities were the most important push forces. The average rural income of 75 shillings per month indicates some economic opportunities were available in the rural areas. As a result, the relative rather than the absolute nature of the push forces is noted.

The presence of friends and relatives and the best opportunities for obtaining a job in a particular urban center are the most significant forces pulling migrants to that town or city. There is some variation among urban centers in the relative importance of economic pull forces. For example, employment opportunities available were relatively low for Mombasa. The importance of economic pull forces is evident also in the preference expressed by the migrants for their present job and income, but located in their home area (provided they were available there). The existence of economic pull forces from the urban areas is verified by an average rural-urban income differential of more than 100 shillings per month.

The presence of relatives or friends in the urban centers is an important part of the migration process, especially for the younger men and the men with less education. Firstly, the men who indicated the presence of friends or relatives in the urban centers as the primary pull force did, on the average,

receive proportionately more food or housing assistance after migration than was the case for the remainder of the sample. Most men received some food or housing assistance with more housing provided than food. Furthermore, a little more than one-third of the men received assistance from clan contacts in obtaining employment in the urban centers. Also, clan contacts predominated as the primary sources of information about the urban migration destination. There is some evidence of variation among urban centers with reference to the type of clan contacts as well as the extent of assistance provided. For example, a clan contact in Mombasa appears to be a relative while in other urban centers it can be a friend or a relative. Finally, the presence of a relative who provides assistance in an urban center appears to give the migrant a greater possibility to remain unemployed while looking for the particular type of employment he desires.

FOOTNOTES

1. Complete documentation of the sample procedure, a description of the survey, and a copy of all instruments used in the survey are included in "Rural-to-Urban Labour Migration: An Interim Report." A shorter description of the sampling procedure and the survey plus a copy of all instruments used in the survey are included also in an Appendix in "Labor Migration into Urban Centers and Urban Unemployment in Kenya," Ph.D. dissertation.

2. The question of who migrates has been considered in greater detail in "The Rural-to-Urban Migrant in Kenya," African Urban Notes.

3. Albert Zucker, "A Note on the Declining Tendency with Age for Investment in Human Capital," The Journal of Human Resources.

4. Josef Gugler, "On the Theory of Rural-Urban Migration: The Case of Subsaharan Africa," p. 137.

5. Here some caution needs to be exercised since there was significant variation in responses on the first two reasons versus the other reasons among the four groups of urban centers. In Nairobi the economic reasons were relatively less important, therefore, the distribution of economic versus non-economic reasons is applicable for the total population only if the sample selected in Nairobi versus the other urban centers is proportional to the relative importance of each in the rural-urban migration process.

6. John C. Caldwell, African Rural-Urban Migration: The Movement to Ghana's Towns, pp. 83-86.

7. Republic of Kenya, Statistics Division, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, Economic Survey, 1968, (June 1968), Table 8.10, p. 111.

8. Ibid., Table 8.12, p. 112.

9. Gerald G. Somers, "The Returns to Geographic Mobility: A Symposium," The Journal of Human Resources, p. 428.

10. For the chi-square test, the second and third rows were grouped together as were rows four and eight.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beals, Ralph E., Levy, M.B., and Moses, L.N. "Rationality and Migration in Ghana," Review of Economics and Statistics, XLIX (November 1967), 480-86.
- Caldwell, John C. African Rural-Urban Migration: The Movement to Ghana's Towns. New York: Columbia University Press, 1969.
- Gugler, Josef. "On the Theory of Rural-Urban Migration: The Case of Subsaharan Africa," Sociological Studies 2: Migration. Ed. Jackson, J.A. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969, 134-55.
- Kenya, Statistics Division, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. Kenya Population Census, 1962, Vol. III: African Population. October, 1966.
- Rempel, Henry. "Rural-to-Urban Labour Migration: An Interim Report." Nairobi: Institute for Development Studies, Staff Paper No. 39, August, 1968.
- _____. "Labor Migration into Urban Centers and Urban Unemployment in Kenya." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Economics, University of Wisconsin, 1970.
- _____. "The Rural-to-Urban Migrant in Kenya," African Urban Notes, VI (Spring 1971), 53-72.
- Rempel, Henry, Harris, John and Todaro, Michael. "Rural-to-Urban Labour Migration: A Tabulation of the Responses to the Questionnaire Used in the Migration Survey." Nairobi: Institute for Development Studies, Discussion Paper No. 92, March 1970.
- Republic of Kenya, Statistics Division, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. Economic Survey, 1968.
- _____. Statistical Abstract, 1968.
- Republic of Kenya, Statistics Division, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. Kenya Population Census, 1969. Vol. I, November 1970.
- Somers, Gerald G. "The Returns to Geographic Mobility: A Symposium." The Journal of Human Resources, II (Fall 1967), 427-30.
- Todaro, Michael P. "A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less Developed Countries." The American Economic Review, LIX (March 1969), 137-48.

Zucker, Albert. "A Note on the Declining Tendency with Age for Investment in Human Capital." The Journal of Human Resources, II (Fall 1967), 538-40.